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JUN 10, 2022

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INK OCHi

FIRST OF ITS KIND FROM KERALA

58

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

- Gei-ü - A three stringed instrument
- 3D Wildlife Embroidery
- Book - Curse of the Malignant
- Vin D' Orange

CULTURAL eMAGAZINE
INK OCHi
FIRST OF ITS KIND FROM KERALA

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Editor's Note

TAZAUNDAING FESTIVAL

A trip to Myanmar is mostly a throwback in time, where life still goes at a slower pace. Internet came to the country relatively recently and old traditions live strong everywhere you visit. In the midst of the peacefulness, whether in Mandalay or Bagan, there is always a feeling of being lost in time. But that doesn't mean the country isn't filled with surprises at every corner.

Case in point is the Taunggyi hot air balloon festival. This annual event is a stark contrast to all the other serene festivals: it's loud, bright and colorful. Myanmar pop music, fireworks, bright neon lights, and the main attraction: colorful hot air balloons.

If you are in Myanmar around November, this fascinating spectacle is a must. It is a great opportunity to see another side of Myanmar people, who are normally rather shy and quiet. Loud music, fireworks, and celebrations mark this unique festival. The colorful balloons shine bright in the night sky before "going up" in flames in the sky above the crowds. This certainly is an unforgettable experience you'll only be able to experience in Myanmar.

Happy Reading...!!
Varghese T. Thomas

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Jun 10, 2022

3D EMBROIDERY

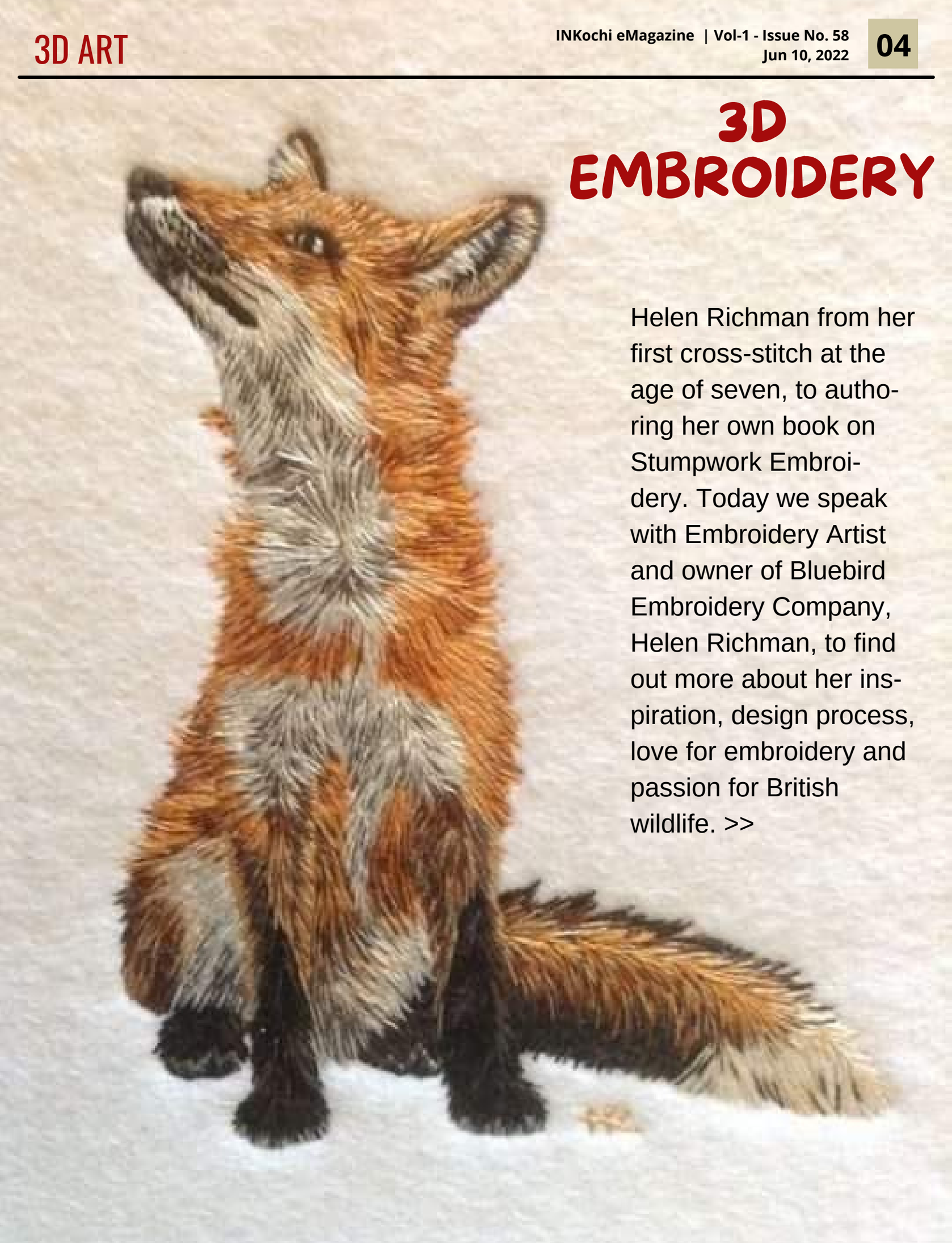
BY TEXTILE ARTIST HELEN RICHMAN

Interview by: Newman Jus
School of Stitched Textiles

STITCHING BRITAIN'S WILDLIFE

INKochi eMagazine | Vol-1 - Issue No. 58
Jun 10, 2022

3D EMBROIDERY

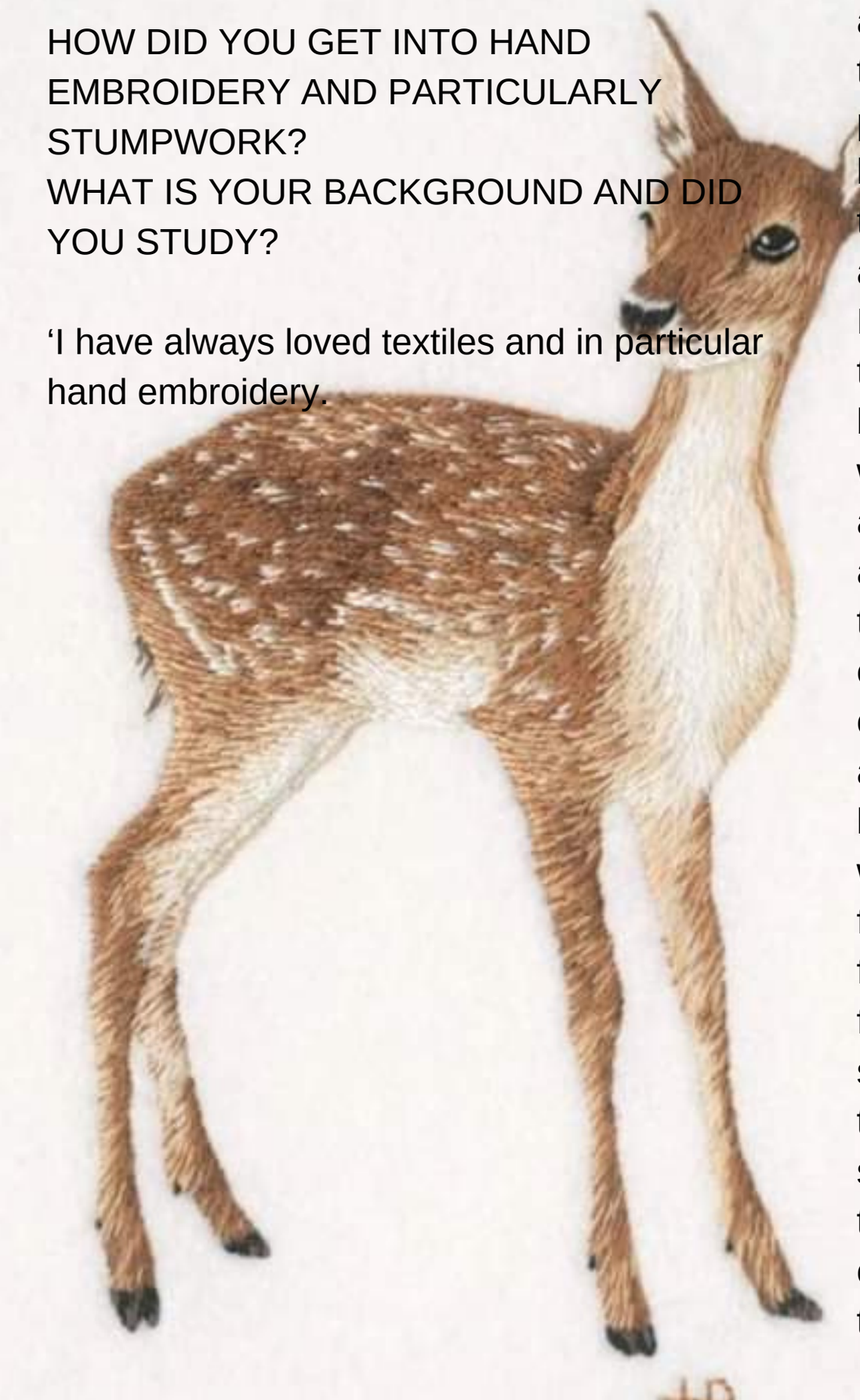


Helen Richman from her first cross-stitch at the age of seven, to authoring her own book on Stumpwork Embroidery. Today we speak with Embroidery Artist and owner of Bluebird Embroidery Company, Helen Richman, to find out more about her inspiration, design process, love for embroidery and passion for British wildlife. >>

3D EMBROIDERY

HOW DID YOU GET INTO HAND EMBROIDERY AND PARTICULARLY STUMPWORK?
WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND AND DID YOU STUDY?

‘I have always loved textiles and in particular hand embroidery.



I created my first cross stitch at the age of seven and studied A level textiles along with digital photography at college before completing my three year apprenticeship at the Royal School Of Needlework. My time at the school was wonderful but hard work; every day was filled with learning and practising a huge array of hand embroidery techniques. I particularly enjoyed designing and creating my own projects and I think this is what led me to love Stumpwork so much. The playful mixture of threads, fabrics and colour; the freedom of combining all sorts of stitches and techniques together in a single design, and the three-dimensional quality of this embroidery technique. >>

3D EMBROIDERY

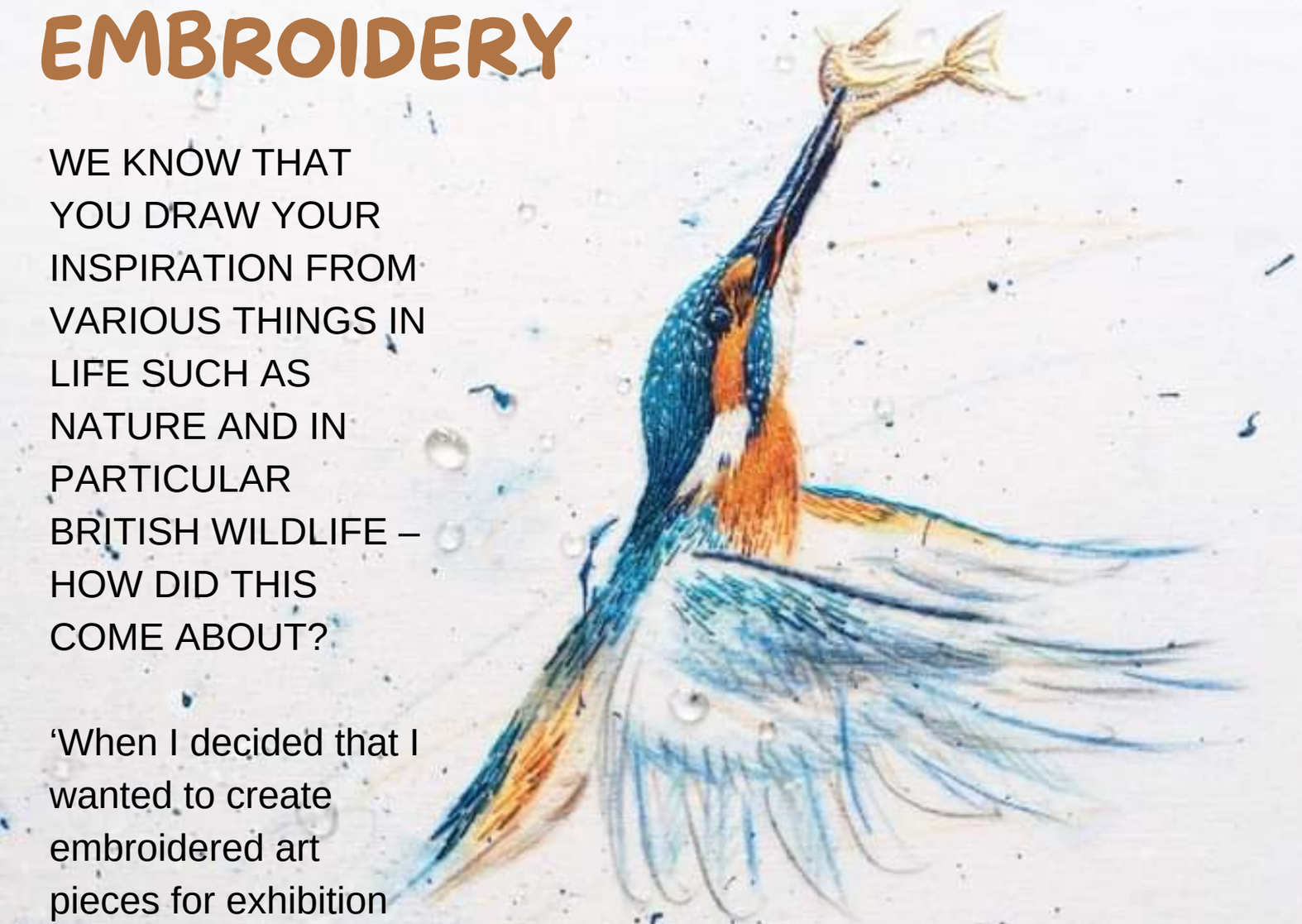
Having the opportunity to write a book about this charming technique was a joy and I hope that it will encourage and inspire other embroiderers to also give it a go.'

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR WORK. MEDIUM USED, FORM, STYLE?

'A lot of my work revolves around designing and creating new embroidery kits which I sell through my online shop, Bluebird Embroidery Company. I really enjoy the challenge of producing designs which my customers will love creating for themselves. Because everybody has their own favourite technique, it means that I am very lucky to constantly be stitching samples of all kinds of embroidery. However, I have to say that my favourite embroidery techniques to work with are silk shad-ing, goldwork, stumpwork and crewel-work. I like to think that my designs are fun but elegant with plenty of attention to detail.' >>

3D EMBROIDERY

WE KNOW THAT YOU DRAW YOUR INSPIRATION FROM VARIOUS THINGS IN LIFE SUCH AS NATURE AND IN PARTICULAR BRITISH WILDLIFE – HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?



‘When I decided that I wanted to create embroidered art pieces for exhibition and sale I immediately turned to my passion for British wildlife to use as the theme for my first collection.

I love spending time out in the countryside and am very lucky in that living in Somerset means that inspiration is never far away. For many hours I researched and studied various species before deciding on the final eight: Fox, Badger, Hedgehog, Little Owl, Rabbit, Grey Squirrel, Fallow Deer and Wood Mouse and concluded that the technique of silk shading would be the perfect choice for realistically recreating the effect of fur and feathers. >>

3D EMBROIDERY

I used up to 14 colours of stranded cotton threads simultaneously inserted into individual needles to delicately build up the shading and form of each animal. These were stitched onto backgrounds of ivory cotton felt to contrast with the smooth crisp threads, making the animals really stand out and come alive.'

WHICH ARTISTS INSPIRE YOU?

'I often turn to the work of traditional craftsmen for inspiration. Being a member of the Somerset Guild Of Craftsmen has introduced me to a broad spectrum of crafts and design styles from wood carving and ceramics, to glass engraving and calligraphy. These I then use as a rich source of inspiration to develop and adapt my own designs.'

WHAT'S YOUR DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FOR YOUR DESIGNS, IF ANY?

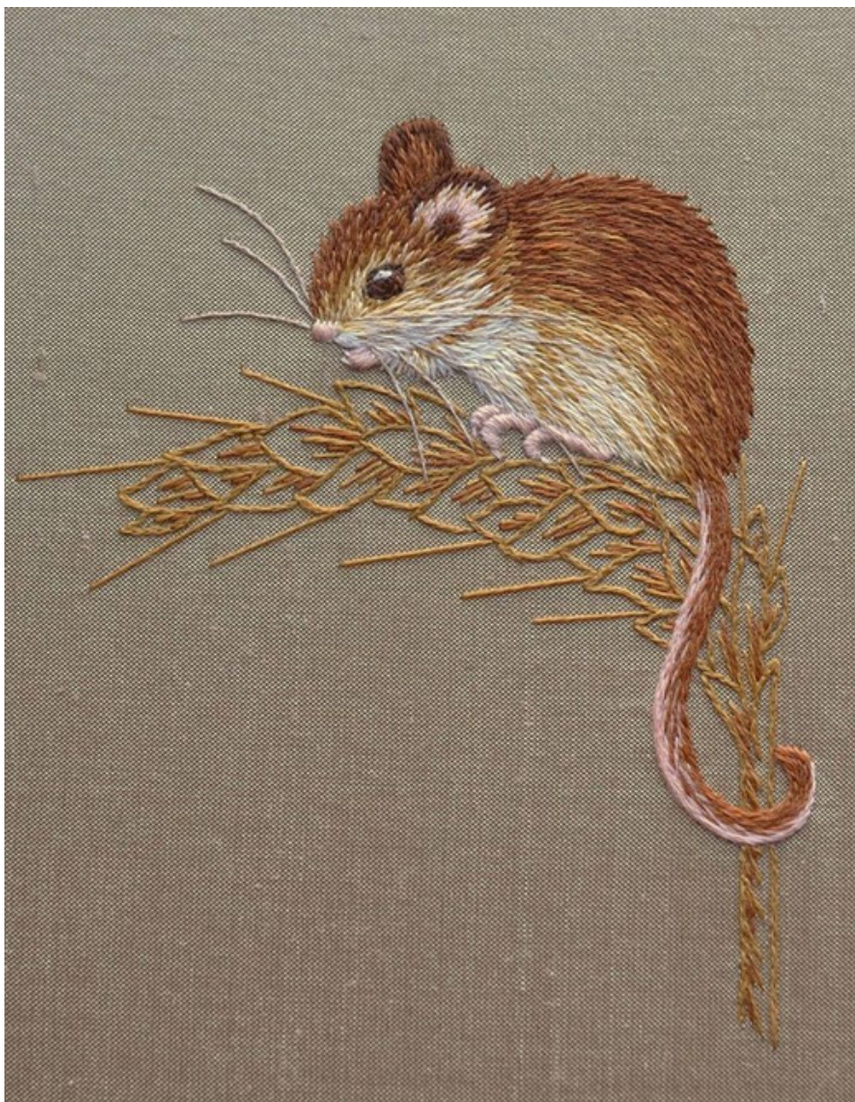
'To turn a design idea or concept into a piece of embroidery I often follow the same process. I will begin by researching my theme or subject matter; this can be on the internet, in books or by drawing studies and taking photos. I then draw rough sketches which will develop into a simple but clear line drawing. This I will use to experiment with different combinations of colour to help me choose threads and fabrics, to plan which stitches and techniques will be used and to organise the order in which the design will be worked. >>

3D EMBROIDERY

Once all of this has been finalised I then create a full size drawing of the design which I will then transfer onto fabric to begin stitching.'

HOW DID YOU DEVELOP YOUR OWN STYLE AND INNER VOICE? WAS THERE A DEFINING MOMENT FOR YOU OR WAS IT A GRADUAL PROCESS?

'My own style developed over time as I learned which embroidery techniques I enjoyed and which ones could be combined and adapted to suit the designs and subject matters I enjoy creating. I love silk shading as it feels very free – you build up the colour, texture and placement of stitches by eye which gives it a quality reminiscent of painting. This combined with stumpwork can create very realistic and dimensional work.' >>



3D EMBROIDERY

DO YOU EVER FEEL UNMOTIVATED, IF SO HOW DO MOTIVATE YOURSELF ON THESE OFF DAYS?

‘Of course! Sometimes there are days when I feel completely unmotivated to stitch. But on those I’ve learned not to force myself to sit down and work. I never produce my best stitching and often have to unpick the next time I visit it anyway. Instead I will try and get myself outside when I feel like this, going for a country walk with the dog is my best motivation and provides an opportunity for mulling over designs.’ <>

ATSO CHASIE

Source:
Eastern Mirror

Atso Chasie, a musician from Nagaland, North-East India, is the inventor of the **Gei-ü**, a creative three-stringed instrument.

He was one of the finalists at the Social Innovation Lab, Pune Centre on Innovations 2020. >>

ATSO CHASIE

Gei-ü is an improvised/refined string & bow instrument developed from some of the traditional Naga instruments like Nraiibu and Marok Kongki- a bowing string fiddle. According to Chasie, Gei-ü provides a much better sound in terms of tone, octaves, options for more musical notes to execute (unlike the traditional ones which in fact is only percussive in nature). >>

ATSO CHASIE

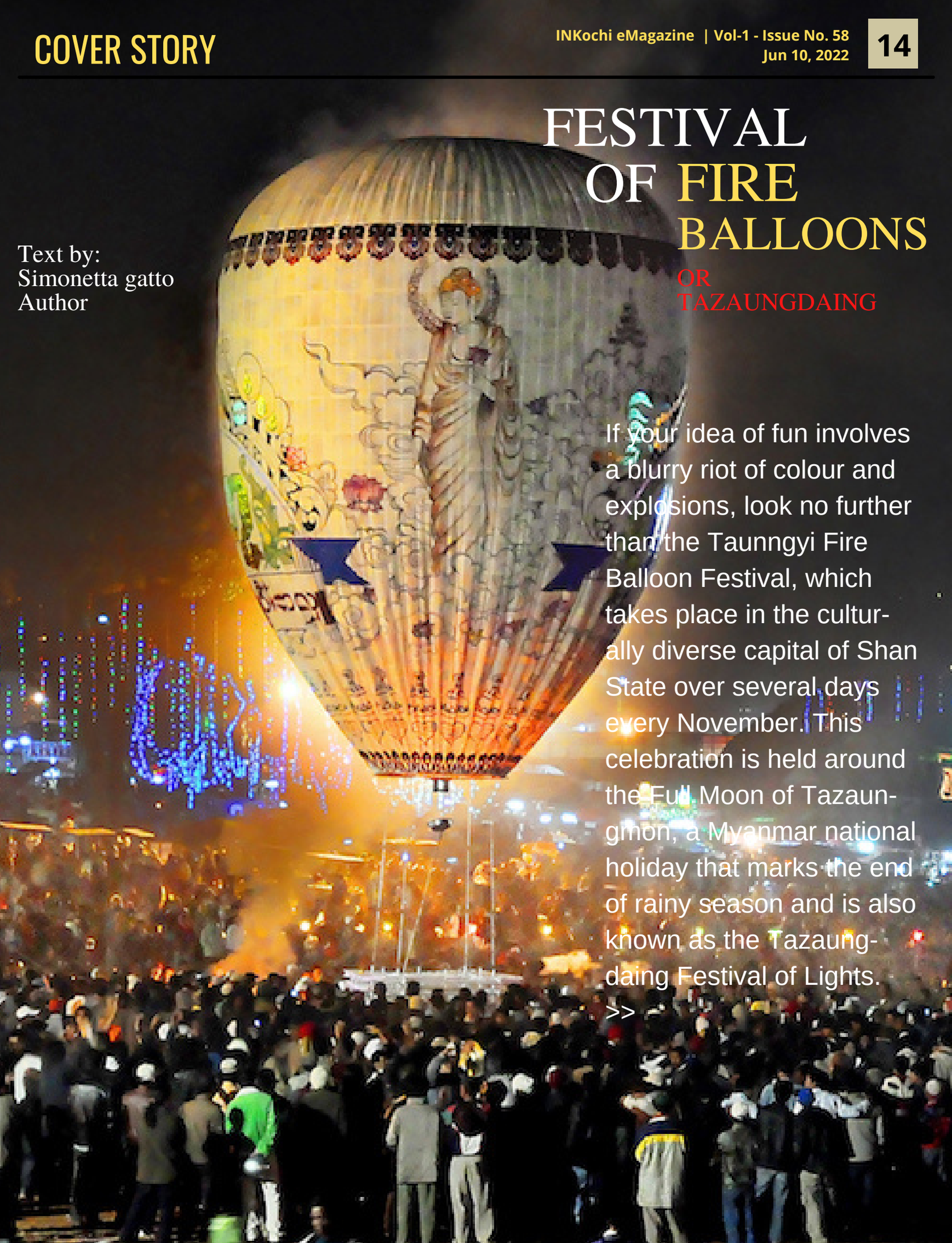
Chasie started working on his instrument from 2014 which got the official introduction in 2017.

Chasie has been stressing on the importance of preserving Naga musical heritage and he believes that his instrument can help make that dream a reality. <>

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

OR TAZAUNGDAING

Text by:
Simonetta gatto
Author



If your idea of fun involves a blurry riot of colour and explosions, look no further than the Taunngyi Fire Balloon Festival, which takes place in the culturally diverse capital of Shan State over several days every November. This celebration is held around the Full Moon of Tazaungmon, a Myanmar national holiday that marks the end of rainy season and is also known as the Tazaungdaing Festival of Lights.

>>

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

Traditionally, it is a festival to pay homage to the Sulamani Pagoda by sending up decorated hot air balloons, and lately it also became as a Hot Air Balloon Competition Festival and the festival is divided into two parts; daytime competition and nighttime competition. In the daytime, hot air balloons are sent up with the shapes of various animals and mythical creatures, and hot air balloons with firework & fire-cracker (known as Nya Mee Gyi) and lot of lanterns are hanging in the hot air balloons (known as Seinnaban) are sent up in the nighttime. >>

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

Although the releasing of balloons is nominally an offering to the heavens to ward away evil spirits, and the national holiday is rooted in Buddhist and Hindu cosomology (it is also celebrated in Thailand, where it is known as Loi Krathong), the tradition of hot air balloon competition in Taunggyi was actually begun by the British in the late 19th century.

The Pa-O tribal community makes giant paper balloons, often in the shape of animals, which are floated up into the sky day and night in a series of competitions.

FLYING BUDDHAS IN MYANMAR

There is a legend in Myanmar whereby the Buddha's mother, who died seven days after giving birth but still cared for her son from a Hindu-Buddhist heaven, sensing that he was about to abandon his royal life, spent a night weaving the yellow cloth he would use as a monk. >>

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

The stories behind the festivities are slightly different, but the basic celebrations are similar, involving decorated water floats, candle lights, and lanterns which are propelled into the sky by the heat generated from a candle or some firewood attached at the base of the lantern or balloon. It probably started as a nautical festival in present-day Odisha, was brought by sailors to the capital of the Khmer Empire in modern-day Cambodia, and exported to the rest of Southeast Asia from there. >>

The occasion is marked by a festival called Tazaungdaing, held on the full moon day of the eighth month of the Burmese calendar, which usually happens in early November at the end of the monsoons.

The day is important in all Theravada Buddhist countries, celebrated as Loy Krathong in Thailand, Bon Om Tuk in Cambodia, Full Moon Poya in Sri Lanka, the Lantern Festival in China, and the Boita Bandana in Odisha, India.

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

In Myanmar, the festival is a chance to engage in charity and alms-giving, pay respect to the elders, visit the ancestral village, pray in as many pagodas as possible, and attend one of the many concerts and traditional drama performances being held throughout the country.

There are also weaving competitions, with women continuously working on the loom to produce the yellow cloth used by the monks as a robe.

The competition is particularly hot in Yangon's Shwedagon Pagoda, where weavers take turns to work through the night until the winner is announced on full moon day. >>

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

Then there's the hot air balloon competition in Taunngyi, the capital of Shan state, which starts a week before and ends on the full moon day. Here the festival is a bit of a fair with plenty of loud music, dance stages, Ferris wheels powered by young men, and stalls serving food and beer throughout the nights.

The balloons are huge, painted or printed with advertisements or intricate Buddhist designs, often covered with hooks for people to attach hundreds of small candle holders wrapped in different color plastic. >>

FESTIVAL OF FIRE BALLOONS

Sometimes the balloons trail a mesh lit with more candles or a decorated box filled with fireworks, which, once flying, instead of shooting into the air release their streamers towards the earth, creating showers of sparkles.
At least, that's the idea, because in reality accidental fireworks explosions happen all the time, the balloons often crashing back onto the crowds while the pyrotechnic are still exploding and the candles are shooting in all directions. <>

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Vocals - **Noby Paul & Meryl Kallickal** (New Jersey)

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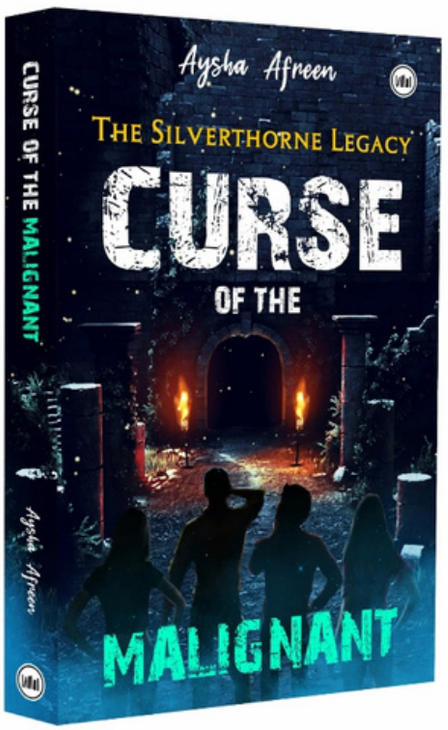
Tabla - **Boby Mathew** | *Flute* - **Subhash Cherthala**
Carnatic Violin - **Ajith Edapally** | *Track Mixed* - **Joby Perambra**

Vocals Recorded, Mixed & Mastered
Noby Paul @ peaks n lows pro audios New Jersey
DOP -**Two Frames, Noby Paul & Hanok V Sabu**

Video Editing - **Noby Paul**
Title & Poster Design - **Saju**

AYSHA ALFREEN



ABOUT THE BOOK

By Deepthi L
(Writer & Blogger)

Associate Editor
Booksthakam

16 year old Aysha Afreen is a writer and a voracious reader whose imagination knows no bounds. Her love for the written word began at a very young age, with late-night reading sprees and bedtime stories. She started writing at the age of thirteen. The debut novel of the teenage author, 'Curse of the Malignant', the first book of the duology series 'The Silverthorne Legacy', revolves around the fictitious town Northacus and the century-old curse. Two kids, Ish Evans and Hallie Moore, are in search of their friend Adam and the dangers awaiting them are more than they think. The book falls under the category of fantasy and mystery. It is recommended for readers from 8 years and up. Even though it deals with mystery, there are also elements of emotion and the bonding of friends and family.

The book is published by Booksthakam India and is available on Amazon in 16 countries. Within days of its release, apart from the sales in other countries such as U.S, U.K, Canada, now the book has been listed in the best-seller chart on Amazon India in the category of 'Children's Mysteries & Curiosities' and grabbed nation-wide attention among young readers. The second book, the last of the series, is expected to be published on December 2022. Aysha doesn't plan to stop with 'The Silverthorne Legacy'; she has already started working on her next book. She advises aspiring writers to "trust the process". "The first draft is never even near the final draft," she says. She instructs people like her to start writing and let the ideas flow. <>

VIN D'ORANGE IS AN EASY, DIY APERITIF

BY KARA NEWMAN
SPIRITS EDITOR

Vin d'orange is a traditional Provençal aperitif made from wine, often local rosé, infused with bitter Seville oranges to delicious, easy-sipping effect. It's an ideal way to preserve the fleeting citrus at its peak.

It's rare to spy bitter oranges, according to David Lebovitz in his new book, Drinking French. When he sees the elusive fruit at Paris markets, "I snag 'em and put up a batch of this aperitif wine so it's ready for spring." The same impetus inspired Samantha Sheehan, winemaker and founder of Mommenpop vermouth, to infuse California citrus into her d'Orange bottling. She first encountered the bright-hued sipper stateside, at Berkeley, California, restaurant Chez Panisse. At the time, the legendary spot served a house-made version. Sheehan fell hard for its "marm-alade characteristic," she says, and the notion of holding onto a season.

"Wine is seasonal, citrus is seasonal," she says. "I was excited about the idea of liquid marmalade."

Ingredients and Directions
In large glass jar, combine 2 bottles dry white or rosé wine, 1 cup vodka and ¾ cup sugar.

Cut 3 Seville (bitter) oranges, 1 sweet orange and 1 lemon into 8 pieces each. Add citrus pieces and 1 stick cinnamon to wine jar. Cover jar and shake until sugar is dissolved.

Store in cool, dark place for 1 month. Shake every few days. Use mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth to strain wine. Decant into clean bottles, and seal tightly with cork. Store in refrigerator or cool, dark place until ready to drink. Makes about 2 quarts. <>

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